

Message Text

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43

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

UNCLAS STATE 205123

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, KS, TW

SUBJECT: PROPOSED MUSHROOM LEGISLATION

REF: SEOUL 3652

1. IN RESPONSE TO LOCAL INQUIRIES EMBASSY MAY CONFIRM THAT COMPANION BILLS WHICH WOULD IMPOSE QUANTITATIVE LIMITATIONS ON THE IMPORTATION OF MUSHROOMS ARE NOW PENDING IN THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES. THE HOUSE BILL, WHICH WAS INITIALLY INTRODUCED ON JULY 27 AS H.R. 14881, WAS REINTRODUCED IN IDENTICAL FORM ON AUGUST 3 AS H.R. 15019 WITH THE ADDITION OF SEVEN COSPONSORS. BOTH BILLS HAVE BEEN REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS. THE SENATE BILL, S. 3704, INTRODUCED ON JULY 28, HAS BEEN REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE.

2. WHILE NO SPECIFIC OVERALL LIMITATION IS STIPULATED, THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION APPEARS INTENDED TO LIMIT IMPORTS OF MUSHROOMS IN VARIOUS FORMS TO AN AGGREGATE QUANTITY OF UNCLASSIFIED

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SOMEWHAT LESS THAN 40 MILLION POUNDS ANNUALLY. PERMISSIBLE

IMPORTS FROM TAIWAN AND KOREA, WHICH TRADITIONALLY HAVE CONSISTED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY OF MUSHROOMS IN THE CANNED FORM, WOULD BE LIMITED TO 25 MILLION AND 6 MILLION POUNDS,

RESPECTIVELY, AND FROM ALL OTHER SOURCES OF SUPPLY, TO THE QUANTITY ENTERED FROM EACH SUCH SOURCE OF SUPPLY DURING THE CALENDAR YEAR 1974. THE PROPOSED LIMITATIONS WOULD APPLY TO ANY IMPORTS OF MUSHROOMS CLASSIFIED FOR CUSTOMS PURPOSES AS FRESH UNDER ITEM 144.10 OR AS DRIED UNDER ITEM 144.12, OR AS PREPARED OR PRESERVED, INCLUDING CANNED, UNDER ITEM 144.20 OF THE TARIFF SCHEDULES OF THE UNITED STATES. SPEAKING SOLELY IN TERMS OF CANNED MUSHROOMS, THE PROPOSED QUOTA ALLOCATION OF 6 MILLION POUNDS FOR KOREA REFLECTS A CUTBACK OF NEARLY 40 PERCENT FROM THE AVERAGE ANNUAL LEVEL OF IMPORTS PREVAILING OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, AND FOR TAIWAN, 20 PERCENT.

3. WHILE WE ARE UNFORTUNATELY NOT IN A POSITION TO GIVE YOU ANY MEANINGFUL ASSESSMENT OF THE DISPOSITION OF THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION, THE EMBASSY MAY, AT ITS

DISCRETION, POINT OUT THAT NONE OF THE BILLS HAS BEEN INTRODUCED AT THE REQUEST OF THE ADMINISTRATION. ONCE PROPOSED LEGISLATION, SUCH THE COMPANION BILLS APPLYING TO MUSHROOMS, HAS BEEN REFERRED TO THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE IN EITHER OR BOTH CHAMBERS THE USUAL PROCEDURE IS FOR THE COMMITTEE TO REQUEST EXECUTIVE AGENCY VIEWS WHICH, IN TURN, MAY BE FOLLOWED BY THE CONVENING OF A PUBLIC HEARING. WE HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED ANY REQUEST FOR OUR VIEWS FROM CONGRESS. WE WILL KEEP YOU APPRISED OF ANY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS. KISSINGER

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